

TAVISTOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT of MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH 1944/45.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1944/45 in an abridged form.

The health of the town was good during the year but infectious diseases were somewhat above the average.

The housing shortage remained acute and a great many new houses are required. The population of the town has increased by almost a thousand persons since the last census and whether or not this increase will become permanent no doubt will depend upon the manner the housing problem is dealt with.

Staff of Public Health Department.

Medical Officer of Health.

E.D.Allen-Price M.D., (State Medicine) M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.,

Surveyor and Chief Sanitary Inspector

W.E.Colston F.I.A.S., M.R.S.I.,

Assistant Sanitary Inspector.

Vacant.

Section A. General Statistics.

Area (acres)	2098
Population 1931	5130
Estimated population 1944	6086

Vital Statistics

		Male	Female	
Live Births	Legitimate	44	39	
	Illegitimate	4	6	
	Total	48	45	93

Birth rate per 1,000 resident population	15.3
England and Wales	17.6

Deaths	Males	40	Females	33	Total	73.
--------	-------	----	---------	----	-------	-----

Death rate per 1,000 residents	12.0.
England and Wales	11.6
Deaths from maternal causes	1
Deaths of infants under one year	2
Death rate of infants	21.5
England and Wales	46.0

The seventy-three deaths of townspeople during the year were made up as follows:

Infectious Causes

Tuberculosis 1

General Causes

Cancer	15
Diabetes	2
Cerebral Haemorrhage	8
Heart disease	24
Respiratory disease	2
Appendicitis	1
Digestive diseases	5
Nephritis	1
Maternal causes	1
Prematurity etc.	2
Violent causes	5
All Causes	5

The majority of deaths occurred at an advanced age.

Section B.

General Provision of Health Services.

These remain as previously reported. There is a great need for maternity accommodation for the town and district. Representations have been made to the County Authority regarding this matter and it is hoped that adequate facilities will be made available.

Section C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water Supply

The water supply to the Urban District is obtained by means of field pipes laid in a total of 127 acres of pasture land in what are known locally as the Sandy Park and Wallabrook Valleys.

SUFFICIENCY

It is established beyond question that the supply at the source is more than ample for from eight to ten months of the year but during the dry periods of Summer and Autumn a restricted supply would normally be in operation. The investigations referred to in the report for 1943 on the responsibility of securing an additional supply of water are still current. During the period of 20th and 25th June an intermittent supply to the town was only possible as the demand of the consumers exceeded the supply. The supply was terminated during night time for this period and the arrival shortly afterwards of a wet period enabled a normal service to be restored.

QUALITY

Quarterly samples were obtained and submitted for bacteriological examination which were reported to be satisfactory bacteriologically.

An annual chemical examination also made and that for 14th June 1944:

	<u>Kilworthy</u>	<u>Sandy Park</u>
Hardness	4.2°	4.6°
Chlorides as Chlorine	1.4	1.1 parts/1,000
Ammonia free & saline as nitrogen	Nil	Nil
Ammonia, albuminoid as nitrogen	:0084	:007
Nitrates as nitrogen	:09	:15
Nitrates as nitrogen	Nil	Nil
Oxygen (absorbed 3 hrs at 37° C)	:02	:012
Metals	Zinc, copper & lead absent (both)	
Remarks	Sample clear and free from sediment (both)	

TREATMENT of both supplies is by simple chlorination before distribution and residual of .1 p.p.m. is arranged for.

Inspection and Supervision of Food:

(a) Meat Inspection: The additional Sanitary Inspector appointed by the Urban District Council in concert with neighbouring local authorities for the purpose of meat inspection, resigned on the 1st of October and it is satisfactory to report that the interim arrangements made have maintained the standard of meat inspection at the abattoir.

	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep</u>
No. of animals inspected:	1963	1605	247	1383	10,073
Percentage of Carcasses affected with Tuberculosis	1.02%	2.49%	-	.29%	-
Percentage of Carcasses affected with disease other than tuberculosis	1.43%	6.36%	4.45%	1.59%	.79%
Percentage of organs affected with Tuberculosis	3.26%	8.16%	7.69%	.14%	-
Percentage of organs affected with disease other than tuberculosis	15.95%	27.98%	3.64%	1.95%	7.6%

Total Carcasses 15,271

Section D. Housing. Only routine work done during the year.

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food:

Routine inspections were carried out. The milk supply in many cases leaves much to be desired. I would once again point out that the only safe milk is one which has received heat treatment.

Section F. Prevention of and control over infectious diseases.

The following notifications were received from medical practitioners during the year.

Scarlet Fever	10
Diphtheria	10
Typhoid Fever.	2
Cerebro Spinal Fever	5
Whooping Cough	9
Puerperal Fever	1
Measles	6
Pneumonia	1
Malaria	2

Most of the scarlet fever and diphtheria cases occurred before my return. I am therefore unable to comment on them. It would appear that the incidence of the more serious infections were somewhat above the average. Diphtheria immunisation proceeded satisfactory and at the close of the year it was estimated that fifty-two per cent of the children under five and eighty-seven per cent of school children have been protected.

Tuberculosis.

Six fresh cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were notified and one death was reported. At the end of the year forty-seven cases remained on the register.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant.

E.D.ALLEN-PRICE.

TAVISTOCK URBAN DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

of

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for

Year ending 31st December 1945.

Public Health Staff

Medical Officer of Health:

E.D.Allen-Price M.D.(State Medicine) Ch.B., D.P.H.
Birm:

Surveyor & Chief Sanitary Inspector:

W.E.Colston: F.I.A.S., M.R.San.I:

Additional Sanitary Inspector and Meat Inspector.

E.E.Potter. Cert.R.S.I & J.B.,
Meat & Food Inspectors' Cert:

Honorary Meteorologist:

Mrs. M.L.Monk:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemon,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1945 still of necessity an abridged war time edition.

The general health of the Town remained good throughout the year and nothing in the nature of an epidemic was recorded.

It will be seen from the tables of statistics that the deaths exceeded the births by 24 but this cannot be cause for alarm as during the time covered by this report a large part of the young people were away on active service. There will doubtless be a considerable improvement in time for your next report. This raises the question of maternity accommodation. If the sixty-one births which took place or at least were registered as having been born to residents, only forty-six were actually born in the Town. The remaining fifteen, presumably for lack of accommodation had to leave the district to have their babies. If this occurs with a greatly diminished birth rate what are we to expect when the births return to normal? As your Council are aware all efforts to persuade the responsible Authority to provide the Town with adequate accommodation have up to the present been unsuccessful. I therefore mention these facts in order that any effort to improve the situation will be followed up.

The housing problem in the town is very acute and this is in spite of the fact that well over one thousand displaced persons have returned to other parts of the country.

Section A. General Statistics.

Area in acres	.....	.....	2098
Population - 1931 Census	.....	.....	5131
Estimated population - mid 1945	.....	.....	5970
Number of inhabited houses	.....	.....
Rateable value	.....	.....	£39,015.
Product of penny rate	.....	.....	£156. 7. 4d.

Vital Statistics

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births	31	30	61
Legitimate	28	26	54
Illegitimate	3	4	7

Birth rate per 1000 estimated population 10.2

Still births 3 Still birth rate 49.1

England &
Wales.
16.1

0.46

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths	42	43	85

Death rate per 1000 population 14.2 11.4

Deaths from puerperal causes nil 2.79

Deaths of infants under 1 year 4 - -

Infantile mortality 65.8 46.0

The chief causes of death of the townsfolk were -

Infectious diseases

Tuberculosis	4
Poliomyelitis	1

General diseases

Cancer	14	
Diabetes	3	
Cerebral		
Haemorrhage	6	
Heart disease	31	
Disease of lungs	5	
Gastric ulcer	1	
Infantile		
Diarrhoea	1	
Other digestive		
diseases	3	
Nephritis	1	
Premature birth		
etc.	2	
Suicide	1	
Other violent		
causes	4	
All other causes	<u>8</u>	<u>Total 85</u>

Age of Death Table

<u>Age at death</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
Infants under 1 year	3	2	
1 - 4	1	-	
5 - 14	-	-	
15 - 24	-	2	
25 - 34	-	-	
35 - 44	3	1	
45 - 54	4	2	
55 - 64	7	4	
65 - 74	12	6	
75 and over	<u>12</u>	<u>26</u>	
Total	42	Total 43	<u>Total 85</u>

Section B: General Provision of Health Services.

These are essentially the same as set out in my last full report for the year 1938:

Section C: Water Supply.

Sufficiency. Little progress has been made in augmentation of the Council's water supply which in previous years was noted to be sufficient except in times of drought. It is likely in the years of National re-organisation ahead that Tavistock will expand and make demands upon the water supply which will be difficult to meet without provision of a supplementary supply. The Council are aware of this and are urged to formulate a scheme to supplement their supply.

Quality. Quarterly samples are submitted for bacteriological examination and one only from the Bannawell Street supply was adversely reported upon. The presence of coliform organisms was detected which indicated

- (1) inadequate chlorination or
- (2) access of organisms to the water after chlorination

Subsequent examinations of the water to the date of compilation of this report (June 1946) have all proved satisfactory and it is assumed that the organisms came from the tap owing to a lapse in technique of collection of the sample.

Chemical Examinations.

Annual samples (20/3/45) have been reported on as follows:

	<u>Kilworthy</u>	<u>Sandy Park</u>
	<u>Kilworthy</u>	<u>Sandy Park</u>
Hardness (Total)	4.4	4.4 (Bannawell Street supply)
Chlorides as Chlorine	1.5	1.6
Ammonia free & saline as nitrogen	Nil	.0004
Ammonia, Albuminoid as nitrogen	.002	.0018
Nitrates as nitrogen	.128	.224
Nitrates as nitrogen	Nil	Nil
Oxygen (absorbed 3 hrs at 37°C)	.03	.022
Metals (Zinc copper and lead)	not detected	not detected
P.H. Value	6.1	6.4
Remarks	Sample clear and free from sediment	

Treatment

Both supplies are chlorinated (Simple chlorination).

A residual of 1 P.P.M. is secured and recorded about twice weekly throughout the year.

Swimming Baths. The public swimming bath is supplied from the trunk main to the Bannawell Street water supply, is emptied and cleansed once fortnightly and is considered a satisfactory swimming bath water.

Section D. Housing.

The serious shortage of housing is being dealt with as expeditiously as circumstances permit. The Council have in process of construction 28 houses as the first instalment of the first year's programme of 44 houses and these will be occupied during 1946. A second programme of 94 houses will then be commenced.

Apart from this immediate problem of providing accommodation for people who have none I would ask the Council to always keep in mind that considerable areas of the town are still waiting to be dealt with under the old housing acts as slum areas. It is therefore necessary not only to have an immediate programme to deal with an emergency but also a long term policy to abolish an accumulation of unfit dwellings.

Section III: Inspection and supervision of Food.

Milk. Twenty-six samples have been taken for bacteriological examination during the year of which 16 were reported upon adversely. The matter of the unsatisfactory samples was followed up by letters or by visits to the farms. In addition 11 samples of Pasteurised milk were taken and submitted to the phosphatase test. One of these samples failed to pass the test and this matter was taken up with the dealer concerned.

One retail purveyor appeared before the responsible Committee to show cause why his name should not be struck from the Register and after hearing his case was cautioned as to his methods of handling, storage and distribution of milk.

Meat Inspection

<u>No. of animals inspected</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Sheep</u>
	2075	1352	272	1227	9765
Percentage of carcasses affected with Tuberculosis	.53%	3.47%	1.1%	.32%	-
Percentage of carcasses affected with diseases other than T.B.	.96%	5.02%	2.21%	1.79%	.84%
Percentage of Organs affected with Tuberculosis	3.85%	7.61%	6.99%	.08%	.01%
Percentage of Organs affected with diseases other than T.B.	35.18%	37.5%	6.99%	.48%	7.59%

Total number of animals killed	14,691
Total number of carcasses condemned for tuberculosis	65
Total number of carcasses condemned for diseases other than tuberculosis	198
Total number affected with TB. in some part or organ	203
Total number affected with disease other than T.B. in some part or organ	2003
	<hr/>
	2469 = 16.8%
	of total carcasses.
	<hr/>

Inspection of other Foodstuffs.

In addition to the meat inspected at the Public Abattoir the following items have been examined and surrendered in various shops and stores in the Town.

41 tins baked beans
77 tins of milk
61 tins of cooked meat
25 cases of oranges
197 lbs of dried fruit
9 tins of peas
62 tins of jam, marmalade and honey
70 tins of fish
62½ lbs of cheese
3½ lbs of margarine
2 tins of soup
30 bars of chocolate
30 lbs of tripe
12 packets of shredded wheat
4 packets of pudding powders

Complaints

The total number of complaints received during the year was 490,54 of which came from properties not under the Council's control.

One statutory notice was served and complied with, the rest being dealt with by informal notice.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

19 visits have been made to the 15 dairies and cowsheds registered in the Urban district.

Butchers shops

9 visits have been made to the butchers shops in the district.

Disinfestations of Verminous Premises

During the year 11 premises have been treated for infestations of fleas and bugs.
In 3 cases the premises had to be treated a second time.

Fumigation after Infectious diseases.

During the year 10 premises have been fumigated after cases of infectious diseases or on production of a medical certificate.

Factories and Workshops.

15 visits have been made to the factories and workshops. These have been found to be generally clean and satisfactory.

Section F: Prevalence of and control over infectious diseases:

Notifiable infectious diseases were fortunately almost absent during the year.

The following were notified by the practitioners and were isolated in Plymouth Isolation Hospital:

	<u>Cases:</u>
Scarlet Fever	1
Dysentery	1
Diphtheria	1
Infantile Paralysis	1

The case of diphtheria occurred in a young adult who had not been immunised.

The infantile paralysis occurred in a child of two years who died.

Notified by Schools.

	<u>Cases</u>
Chicken pox	19
Ringworms	1
Scabies	2
Impetigo	2

Diphtheria Immunisation

This proceeded during the year as energetically as possible and the last return made to the Ministry showed that from the available figures 52% of the children under school age had been treated and of the school children 87% had been fully immunised. The next return which is in process of formulation is likely to vary very considerably from the last as for the first time a complete register including all sections of the community has been prepared from the National Register and I would point out that the clerical work associated with this one requirement is enormous.

Tuberculosis

Ten new cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year and four deaths were recorded from this disease:

At the present time the position as regards this condition is

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>		<u>Total</u>
Males	26	Males	11	55
Females	12	Females	4	

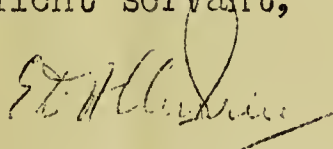
The case rate over a ten year period is 1.6 per 1000 people and of these 4.5% are cured and 22.4% dead:

Compared with other infectious conditions the results of treatment are disappointing:

In conclusion, I would thank all the Councillors and my fellow officials for ready help at all times:

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

